

It is up to the Rank & File to Push the All Craft Movement Forward!

On April 11th, 2008, the Founding Convention of Railroad Workers United adopted a resolution in support of Coordinated Bargaining. The *RWU Resolution on Building Real Bargaining Power* resolved that RWU pledge to do all in its power to convince all rail unions to create a *United Bargaining Coalition* and to cooperate with one other to strengthen bargaining power and end substandard pattern contracts. In addition, the resolution states that "RWU will commit to a cross-craft inter-union education of the membership of all unions to support such a United Bargaining Coalition."

RWU support for this concept has been ongoing from our Founding Convention until the current day. Unfortunately, throughout most of that decade, RWU was the *only* organization of railroad workers to voice support for this idea. But, finally, in 2017, the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division (BMWED) put out the call for all rail crafts to stick together. The union put organizers in the field to assist in building rallies, demonstrations and support for the emerging *All Rail Crafts Coalition* (ARCC) at terminals across the U.S.

RWU sees this as one of the more promising developments in recent rail labor history. We urge all railroad workers to get behind the ARCC movement and do what you can to assist in building such a Coalition in your terminal and your city.

There are a lot of ways you can do this, including:

- 1 – Attend meetings of the local ARCC group in your area.
- 2 – If there is not yet a local/regional ARCC group, start one.
- 3 – Present a resolution in support of the concept to your

local union for consideration by the membership.

4 – Forward the resolution to your international officers and the national Convention for consideration by the delegates.

5 – Post literature in support of ARCC and Coordinated Bargaining on bulletin boards, in shanties and lunch rooms

6 – Attend rallies, pickets, and other actions designed to build cross-craft unity and power.

7 – Raise the issue with co-workers when you go to work.

8 – Bring the question before GCA meetings, Regional meetings, education conferences and other gatherings of railroad rank & file union members and officers.

The idea of cross-craft unity and a universal bargaining coalition is extremely popular among rank & file rails. Unfortunately, some union officials are out of touch with the wishes of their memberships and do not share the enthusiasm for such a unified and universal coalition. Perhaps they are afraid of change. Maybe they fear there will not be a place of prominence for them in such a world. Whatever the case, these reasons are illegitimate. They are self-serving, reactionary attitudes that are counterproductive and hold the workers' movement back. It is time for the union officials of the dozen or more rail unions in the U.S. to take the lead on this issue, to follow the trail being blazed by the rank & file, or to get the out of the way! The movement for universal cross-craft unity and solidarity and a universal coalition of all rail labor is too crucial a development to allow it to be stonewalled or torpedoed by a bunch of old men who are stuck in another era and another time.